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DUO EQUITES ROMANI (Robinson)

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Franklin B. Krauss, Secretary and Treasurer, The Pennsylvania State College, Box 339, State College, Pennsylvania.

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## DVO EQVITES ROMANI<sup>1</sup>

In the first Catilinarian oration<sup>2</sup> Cicero gives a brief but vivid résumé of the meeting of the conspirators held during the night of November 6-7<sup>3</sup> at the house of the senator, M. Poreius Laeca, in the Street of the Scythemakers. He states that Catiline, in spite of well-laid plans for leaving Rome was still delaying his departure, being loath to leave with Cicero still alive. Cicero charges, speaking directly to Catiline: *Reperti sunt duo equites Romani qui te ista cura liberarent et se illa ipsa nocte paulo ante lucem me in meo lecto interfecturos esse pollicerentur*. But, adds Cicero, being immediately informed of the plot, he increased the guards of his house, and refused admittance to these two Roman knights when they came to his door on the pretense of paying an early-morning call.

Who were the two Roman knights to whom Cicero refers? One of them was named C. Cornelius. In his *Pro Sulla*, delivered toward the close of the following year (62 B.C.), Cicero twice states that Cornelius undertook to murder him in his own house.<sup>4</sup> In the second of these two passages Cicero describes the meeting in the house of Laeca in words reminiscent of the passage in the first Catilinarian, and represents Cornelius as demanding for himself the 'privilege' of murdering the troublesome consul, and as later admitting the charge.<sup>5</sup>

Sallust in his *Catiline* corroborates Cicero by naming C. Cornelius as one of the would-be

assassins.<sup>6</sup> He calls him an *eques Romanus*, and likewise in his catalogue of the conspirators lists him among those *ex equestri ordine*.<sup>7</sup>

The second of the two blood-thirsty Roman knights has never been satisfactorily identified. None of the extant works of Cicero affords a clue. Sallust, however, names as the associate of Cornelius in the abortive plot L. Vargunteius,<sup>8</sup> but he is so far from calling him a Roman knight that he designates him as *senator*, and likewise lists him among those *senatorii ordinis* in his catalogue of the conspirators.<sup>9</sup>

The discrepancy in the accounts of Cicero and Sallust is obvious. Since L. Vargunteius was a Roman senator, he could not have been one of the *duo equites Romani* to whom Cicero refers, unless we attribute to Cicero an error in classification which he would scarcely have made. Halm, in his commentary,<sup>10</sup> seeks to explain the difficulty by deducing from a passage in the *Pro Sulla* that Vargunteius had been degraded from his senatorial rank as the result of conviction in a trial for bribery, but proof is lacking, and this proposal is wisely rejected as improbable by Sternkopf in his revision of the Halm edition.<sup>11</sup> It is true that Cicero says that Vargunteius was defended by Q. Hortensius in a trial for bribery,<sup>12</sup> but he does not say that he was convicted, and still less does he say that he was degraded from rank. Furthermore, if Vargunteius was no longer a senator, why should Sallust twice have called him one?

I am convinced that the statements of Cicero

and Sallust are irreconcilable, and that we must accept the disagreement between these two sources. Accordingly, I have examined our other sources in an effort to discover, if possible, the identity of the second of Cicero's *duo equites Romani*.

Cassius Dio does not help us, for he merely states that 'two individuals' (δύο τινάς) promised to break into the house of Cicero at daybreak and to slay him.<sup>13</sup>

Appian's account reads as follows: 'Now Lentulus and his fellow conspirators resolved to proceed in the following manner, as soon as they should learn that Catiline had reached Faesulae. Lentulus himself and Cethegus were to wait at daybreak by the door of Cicero's house with concealed daggers, and then, when they were admitted, as they would be because of their rank, they were to start a conversation on some subject or other, and were to prolong their call by walking about with Cicero, and finally to slay him, when they had drawn him away from the others. Then the tribune, L. Bestia, was to have an assembly of the people called forthwith by heralds, and to speak against Cicero, saying that he was always a coward and a warmonger, and that he had thrown the city into confusion when there was no danger; and after the harangue of Bestia upon the night immediately following, others were to set fire to the city in twelve places and were to plunder it and kill the optimates.'<sup>14</sup>

It will be seen that Appian places the attempted murder after the departure of Catiline from Rome, and that he designates Lentulus and Cethegus as the ones who were to undertake the deed. A comparison with Sallust, *Catiline*, 28 and 43, shows at once that Appian's account is garbled and that he has clumsily conflated two projected attempts upon the consul's life, the one planned for the morning of November 7, and a later one which was to take place in the burning and pillaging of the city at the time when Catiline with his army was expected to appear before the walls. Both Sallust<sup>15</sup> and Cicero<sup>16</sup> state that the execution of this second plot was entrusted to Cethegus, but, unlike Appian, they mentioned Lentulus only as the director of the uprising. Whatever may have been the part

played by Lentulus, the evidence of Appian must be rejected as regards the names of the would-be assassins of the morning of November 7.

There still remains Plutarch, who seems at first sight only to increase our confusion, but will, I believe, upon closer examination, be found to offer a plausible solution of the problem. Plutarch, if we follow his modern editors, gives the names of those who promised to take the consul's life on the morning of November 7 as Marcius and Cethegus. His account is as follows: 'But Catiline, no longer brooking the delay, himself resolved to escape to Manlius and his army, and he ordered Marcius and Cethegus to take swords and to go at dawn to Cicero's door as though they were intending to pay him a call, and to fall upon him and make away with him. Fulvia, a woman of high standing, reported this to Cicero, coming by night and bidding him be on his guard against Cethegus and his men. Now they came at daybreak, and when they were refused admittance they were vexed, and staying by the door they kept shouting in protest, so as to become even more suspected.'<sup>17</sup>

What are we to make of Marcius and Cethegus? Let us first consider the second of these two names, since it offers less difficulty. Plutarch is clearly in error in naming Cethegus as one of those who tried to murder Cicero on the morning of November 7, but his error is easily explained. He has confused the Roman knight, C. Cornelius, whose cognomen is unknown, with the senator and arch-conspirator C. Cornelius Cethegus.<sup>18</sup> A factor contributing to this confusion may have been the circumstance that C. Cornelius Cethegus was assigned the task of killing Cicero at the time of the general massacre and the burning of the city.<sup>19</sup>

Let us now look at the name *Marcius*. Nowhere else do we read of a conspirator by this name. The only Marcius mentioned in connection with the Catilinarian conspiracy is Q. Marcius Rex, consul in 68 B.C., who was ordered by the Senate to go to Faesulae against Manlius and his army.<sup>20</sup>

I must now explain the reservation which I made at the beginning of my discussion of Plutarch's account with the words 'if we follow his

modern editors.' It so happens that precisely at the point where the name Marcius occurs there is an obvious corruption in the manuscripts of Plutarch. They read:<sup>21</sup> καὶ Μάρκιον δὲ καὶ Κέθηγον ἐκέλευσε . . . The first καὶ is clearly superfluous in view of the following δὲ, as has been recognized by Koraes<sup>22</sup> and later editors of Plutarch, who bracket (or omit) the καὶ—a convenient, but not always satisfactory way of emending a text. More probably, the true name is not to be found in Μάρκιον, but lurks in καὶ Μάρκιον. This has been seen by Münzer in his article: 5) *Marcius*, in Pauly-Wissowa. He suggests that the καὶ Μάρκιον of our manuscripts is a corruption of Οὐαργουντέιον (*Vargunteium*). However, even though we make every allowance for the perversity of ancient and mediaeval scribes in distorting proper names, the assumption that Οὐαργουντέιον became καὶ Μάρκιον has nothing to recommend it from the palaeographical point of view, and furthermore does not obviate the difficulty that Vargunteius was not a Roman knight, but a senator.

I wish to suggest an emendation which is more satisfactory palaeographically, and which will give us the name of a prominent Catilinarian conspirator, who may very well have been a Roman knight. For the καὶ Μάρκιον of the manuscripts I propose Καίπαριον (*Caeparium*).

Proper names were ever a fertile source of corruption in the copying of manuscripts, and the more unusual the name the more likely it was to prove a pitfall for the ignorant or careless scribe. The name Caeparius was not a common one. Aside from the references to the Catilinarian conspirator of that name, it seems to be found but once in literature,<sup>23</sup> and only seven sure instances have been adduced from Latin inscriptions.<sup>24</sup> In a rather hasty examination of the *Inscriptiones Graecae* I have not found a single occurrence of this name.

A scribe in copying from a text in *scriptura continua* would easily (I am tempted to say almost inevitably) have mistaken the first syllable of the unusual name ΚΑΙΠΑΡΙΟΝ for the conjunction ΚΑΙ.<sup>25</sup> The change from ΠΑΡΙΟΝ to ΜΑΡΚΙΟΝ involves a twofold corruption (or "emendation"?), the writing of M for Π and the

insertion of K after P. The confusion of Π and Μ in the copying of Greek manuscripts seems to have been fairly common, to judge from several examples for which I wish to express my thanks to Professor Aubrey Diller.<sup>26</sup>

The other corruption, i.e., the insertion of K, does not admit of so definite an explanation. When the well-known Roman name Μάρκιον had once become established in the text, why would it have been changed to Μάρκιον?<sup>27</sup> The fact that the two names are so similar and both of frequent occurrence would, I fancy, have rendered their confusion easy. But more probable, perhaps, is the assumption that the insertion of K was the earlier of the two errors, induced by the presence of this same letter at the beginning of the name ΚΑΙΠΑΡΙΟΝ. The stages of corruption would then have been: ΚΑΙΠΑΡΙΟΝ > ΚΑΙΠΑΡΚΙΟΝ > καὶ πάρκιον > καὶ μάρκιον.

At this point a word regarding the spelling of the name *Caeparius* will be apropos, since the MSS of Cicero *In Cat.* III, 14, have *Ceparium*, and this may be the more familiar form. *Caeparius* represents the better attested orthography. This is the spelling found in the better MSS of Sallust, and also in the MSS of Cicero, *Ad Fam.* IX, 23, where mention is made of another M. Caeparius. The inscriptional evidence, which is particularly convincing in matters of orthography, is overwhelmingly in favor of *Caeparius*. Of the seven instances of this name's occurrence in inscriptions, *Caeparius* (*Caeparia*) is found six times, and *Ceparius* but once.<sup>28</sup>

Our knowledge of M. Caeparius himself is sufficient, I believe, to make him a strong candidate for the questionable honor of having volunteered his services to murder a Roman consul in his bed. He is mentioned once by Cicero,<sup>29</sup> six times by Sallust, and, as I hope all will now agree, once by Plutarch. Though a native of Terracina,<sup>30</sup> he appears to have been one of the ringleaders of the Catilinarian conspiracy. To him had been assigned the task of recruiting the wild shepherds of Apulia,<sup>31</sup> and with Gabinius he engaged the scoundrel T. Vultureius to accompany the Allobrogian envoys to Catiline.<sup>32</sup> He was one of the five conspirators summoned by



Cicero to his presence shortly after the apprehension of the Allobroges at the Mulvian bridge on the night of December 2-3, though he did not obey the summons, since he learned of the sudden turn of events and managed to escape from Rome.<sup>33</sup> Shortly afterwards, however, he was captured and brought back to the city, and was placed under arrest by order of the Senate.<sup>34</sup> With Gabinius and Statilius, he was branded by Cato in his speech before the Senate as a man utterly devoid of scruples.<sup>35</sup> Finally, M. Caeparius was one of the five who paid the extreme penalty in the Tullianum on that grim night of December 5.<sup>36</sup>

Was M. Caeparius a Roman knight? I think it highly probable. Sallust in his catalogue of the conspirators divides the active participants into three classes:<sup>37</sup> first, those of senatorial rank, of whom he mentions eleven by name; second, those of equestrian rank, of whom he mentions but four by name (Caeparius is not among these four); and finally, many from the colonies and *municipia* who were *nobiles* in their own cities.<sup>38</sup> Sallust gives no names of those belonging to this third class, but since Caeparius was from Terracina, and since he played so important a role in the plot, the historian must have had him in mind as one of this group's leading representatives. As a result of the Social War, Roman citizenship had been extended to all Italy south of the Cisalpine province,<sup>39</sup> and a man who was *nobilis* in his own community would probably have possessed the requisite census for enrollment among the *equites Romani*.<sup>40</sup>

If I am right in supposing that Plutarch named Caeparius, and not an otherwise unknown Marcius, as one of the two who attempted the murder of Cicero on the morning of November 7, from what source did he derive this information? We can, I think, posit no more probable source than Cicero himself, or perhaps, his freedman and beloved secretary and friend, M. Tullius Tiro. The works of Cicero recounting the story of his consulship, all now unfortunately lost, were as follows: a memoir of his consulship written in Greek, *Ὑπόμνημα περὶ τῆς ὑπατείας*, two poems each of three books, one entitled *De Consulatu*, the other, *De temporibus suis*, a long

letter to Pompey *de rebus suis in consulatu gestis*, and finally the *Ἀνέκδοτα*, or *De consiliis suis*, which the orator is said to have entrusted to his son for publication after his death.<sup>41</sup> The lost *Vita Ciceronis* by Tiro,<sup>42</sup> because of the author's intimate association with Cicero must have had almost the value of an autobiography.

In one of these lost works, I believe, Plutarch<sup>43</sup> found the names of our *duo equites Romani* given as (C.) Cornelius and (M.) Caeparius, but through an understandable error he transformed Cornelius into Cethegus, while the name of Caeparius has long remained unrecognized because of successive corruptions in the manuscript tradition.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This paper was read before the thirty-seventh annual meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, held in Indianapolis, April 10-12, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> *In Catilinam* I, 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> The date is given by Cicero, *Pro Sulla* 52.

<sup>4</sup> *Pro Sulla* 18 and 52.18: Quibus ego rebus, iudices, ita fleetebar animo atque frangebar ut iam ex memoria quas mihi ipsi fecerat (*sc.* Autronius) insidias deponerem, ut iam immissum esse ab eo C. Cornelium qui me in meis sedibus, in conspectu uxoris ac liberorum meorum trucidaret obliviseerem. (See note 5.)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 52: . . . tum tuus pater, Corneli, id quod tandem aliquando confitetur, illam sibi officiosam provinciam depoposcit ut, cum prima luce consulem salutatum veniret, intromissus et meo more et iure amicitiae me in meo lectulo trucidaret.

<sup>6</sup> *Catilinae Coniuratio* 28, 1. (See note 8.)

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 17, 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 28, 1: Igitur perterritis ac dubitantibus ceteris C. Cornelius eques Romanus operam suam pollicitus et cum eo L. Vargunteius senator constituere ea nocte paulo post cum armatis hominibus sicuti salutatum introire ad Ciceronem ac de inproviso domi suae inparatum confodere.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 17, 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Ciceros Ausgewählte Reden, erklärt von Karl Halm*, III. Vierzehnte verbesserte Auflage besorgt von G. Laubman. Berlin, 1900.

<sup>11</sup> *Ciceros Ausgewählte Reden, erklärt von Karl Halm*, III. In neuer Bearbeitung von Wilhelm Sternkopf. Berlin, 1916.

<sup>12</sup> *Pro Sulla* 6: Quis nostrum adfuit Vargunteio? Nemo, ne hic quidem Q. Hortensius, praesertim qui illum solus antea de ambitu defendisset.

<sup>13</sup> XXXVII, 32.

<sup>14</sup> Appianus, *Bell. Civ.* II, 3, 11-12: Λέντλων δὲ καὶ τοῖς συνωμόταις ἔδοξεν ὅτε Κατιλίαν ἐν Φαισούλαις πυνθάνουτο γεγενῆσθαι Λέντλων μὲν αὐτὸν καὶ Κέθηγον

ἐφεδρεῦσαι ταῖς Κικέρωνος θύραις περὶ ἧς μετὰ κεκρυμμένων ξιφιδίων ἐσδεχθέντας τε διὰ τὴν ἀξίωσιν καὶ λαλοῦντας ὅτιδ' ἡμῖναι τὴν ὁμιλίαν ἐν περιπάτῳ καὶ κτείνειν περισπᾶσαντας ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων Λεύκιον δὲ Βησιτίαν τὸν δήμαρχον ἐκκλησίαν εὐθὺς ὑπὸ κήρυξι συνάγειν καὶ κατηγορεῖν τοῦ Κικέρωνος ὡς αἰεὶ δειλοῦ καὶ πολεμοποιού καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐν οὐδενὶ δεινῷ διαταράττοντος· ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ Βησιτίῳ δημηγορίᾳ, νυκτὸς αὐτίκα τῆς ἐπιούσης, ἑτέρους ἐν δυνάδεα τόποις ἐμπιπράναι τὴν πόλιν καὶ διαρπάξαι καὶ κατακτείνειν τοὺς ἀρίστους.

<sup>15</sup> *Cat. Coniur.* 43, 1-2: *Lentulus cum ceteris . . . constituerant uti . . . cetera multitudo coniurationis suum quisque negotium exequeretur. Sed ea divisa hoc modo dicebantur: . . . uti . . . Cethegus Ciceronis ianuam obsideret eumque vi aggrediretur.*

<sup>16</sup> *In Cat.* IV, 13: < *Lentulus* > attribuit nos trucidandos Cethego . . .

<sup>17</sup> *Cicero* 16, 1-2 (*Plutarchi Vitae Parallelae*, recog. Cl. Lindskog et K. Ziegler, vol. I., fasc. II, Lipsiae, 1914): . . . οὐκέτι καρτερῶν τὴν μέλλουσαν ὁ Κατιλίνας αὐτὸς μὲν ἐκπηδᾶν ἔγνω πρὸς τὸν Μάλλιον ἐπὶ τὸ στράτευμα [καὶ] Μάρκιον δὲ καὶ Κέθηγον ἐκέλευσε ξίφη λαβόντας ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας ὥσθ' ὡς ἀσπασομένους τὸν Κικέρωνα καὶ διαχρήσασθαι προσπεσόντας· τοῦτο Φουλβία γυνὴ τῶν ἐπιφανῶν ἐξήγγειλε τῷ Κικέρωνι νυκτὸς ἐλθούσα καὶ διακελευσαμένη φυλάττεσθαι τοὺς περὶ τὸν Κέθηγον οἱ δ' ἦγον ἅμ' ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ κωλυθέντες εἰσελθεῖν ἡγανάκτον καὶ κατεβόων ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις, ὥσθ' ὑποπτότεροι γενέσθαι.

<sup>18</sup> I can cite a parallel mistake made by Appian in another connection. In describing the stormy meeting of the Senate after word had come of Caesar's crossing the Rubicon, Appian (*Bell. Civ.* II, 36, 145) attributes to Cicero a motion which Plutarch (*Pomp.* 60, 6) correctly ascribes to Tullus, i.e., L. Volcatius Tullus, consul in 66 B.C. Obviously Appian in consulting his source misread the cognomen *Tullus* as the nomen *Tullius* and understood it to refer to Cicero.

<sup>19</sup> See note 16.

<sup>20</sup> Sallust, *Cat. Con.* 30, 3-5; 32, 3; 34, 1.

<sup>21</sup> The entire passage is quoted in note 17.

<sup>22</sup> Πλουτάρχου Βίοι Παράλληλοι V (= 'Ελληνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης Τόμος 'Εβδομος), Paris, 1813.

<sup>23</sup> Cicero, *Ad Fam.* IX, 23.

<sup>24</sup> See *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, Onomasticon* II (Lipsiae, 1907-1913), s.v. *Caeparius*. Only six inscriptions are cited, but in one (CIL V, 8147) the name occurs twice. The abbreviated form *Caep.*, which presumably stands for *Caeparius* or *Caepasius* is found twice. *Caepasius*, which must be an archaic spelling of *Caeparius*, occurs a few times in literature and in inscriptions. Mr. Hugh Davis has kindly gone through the indices of CIL for me, and has found no instance of *Caeparius* beyond those cited in the Thesaurus.

<sup>25</sup> I am assuming that a mediaeval scribe was copying from an ancient majuscule exemplar in *scriptura continua*, but was himself writing in minuscule script with word division. Naturally, this is not the only possibility.

<sup>26</sup> In Sophocles, *Antigone* 980, the leading MS has *πατρός* for *ματρός*; Aristotle, *Poetica* 1449 b, 28, the MSS offer *μαθημάτων*, where the sense requires *παθημάτων*; Herodotus IV, 49, the name of the river Κάρπις appears as *κάρμυς* in codex R; the leading MSS of Strabo XII, 13 (p. 580, 8, ed. Kramer) vary between *μεσσινοῦντα* and *πεσσινοῦντα* (This variation is shown in Diller's own collations of the MSS B, C, D and E); and finally the town which appears as *μασίν* in the MSS of Ptolemaeus, *Geographica* VI, 8, 7, has the forms *πασίδα* and *πασίδος* in the *Periplus* of Marcianus, *Geographi Graeci Minores*, ed. Müller, I, p. 532, 20). Professor Diller has also called my attention to the following note by R. Peppmüller, *Rheinisches Museum* XL (1885), 463, note 1: 'Das TI and H and M and Π häufig verwechselt werden, ist bekannt.'

<sup>27</sup> The reading *καὶ Μάρκιον* cited for the MSS of Plutarch is *ex silentio*. Should a re-examination of them show that *καὶ Μάρτιον* has any respectable authority, I should regard the restoration of *Καιπάριον* as virtually certain.

<sup>28</sup> Also *Caep(arius)*. See note 24.

<sup>29</sup> *In Cat.* III, 14.

<sup>30</sup> Sallust, *Cat. Coniur.* 46, 3: *Caeparium Terracinensem*.

<sup>31</sup> Sallust *l.c.*, Cicero, *l.c.*

<sup>32</sup> Sallust, *op. cit.*, 47, 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 46, 3-4.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* 47, 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 52, 33-34: *nam quid ego de Gabinio, Statilio, Caepario loquar? quibus si quicquam umquam pensi fuisset, non ea consilia de re publica habuissent.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 55, 6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 17.

<sup>38</sup> 17, 4: *Ad hoc multi ex coloniis et municipiis domi nobiles.* I take *nobiles* merely in the sense of 'prominent'.

<sup>39</sup> Th. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte* II (neunte Auflage, Berlin, 1903), pp. 238 f. and 247, note.

<sup>40</sup> See A. Stein, *Der Römische Ritterstand* (*Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte* X, Munich, 1927), pp. 22 ff.

<sup>41</sup> See A. Gudeman, *The Sources of Plutarch's Life of Cicero* (*Publications of the University of Pennsylvania, Series in Philology and Literature* VIII, 2, Philadelphia, 1902) pp. 5-6; and Schanz-Hosius, *Geschichte der Römischen Literatur* I (vierte Auflage, Munich, 1927), pp. 531-537.

<sup>42</sup> Gudeman, *op. cit.*, p. 6, and Schanz-Hosius, *op. cit.*, p. 548.

<sup>43</sup> It is not necessary to assume that Plutarch had a first-hand acquaintance with any of these lost works of Cicero, though P. Weissacker, *Neue Jahrbücher* CXI (1875), 417-428, seeks to prove that Cicero's *Περὶ τῆς ἵπατείας* was the principal (immediate) source of Plutarch in his account of the Catilinarian conspiracy (chapters 10-23), and this conclusion is accepted by Schanz-Hosius, *op. cit.*, p. 533. On the other hand, Gudeman, *op. cit.* (conclusions stated on p. 63), maintains that

Plutarch in his life of Cicero did not consult at first hand the works of Cicero or of any other pre-Augustan author, and that his principal source was the biography by Suetonius in the lost *De viris illustribus*. An extensive Bibliography on the sources of Plutarch is given by Gude-  
man, p. 1, note.

RODNEY P. ROBINSON

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

## REVIEW

**Euripides, Digter en Denker, met 'n Vertaling van sy Hippolytus.** By J. A. Ross. XI, 283 pp.; 14 illustrations. Swets and Zeitlinger, Amsterdam, 1940.

This book is written in Afrikaans and, as the writer states in his Voorwoord (p. IX), had its origin in his desire to make a typical play of Greek tragedy available to the African reading public. Ross has done much more than this, and the title of his book is therefore misleading. The treatment of 'Euripides as Mens, Digter, en Denker' is found chiefly in Chapter V (pp. 93-127). Chapter VI (pp. 128-166) is devoted to the *Hippolytus* and treats briefly a number of important topics: among others, the myth before Euripides, the unity of the plot, tragic irony, the chorus, the messenger, the characters (both divine and human), and Aristotle's theory of *catharsis*. The second part of the book (pp. 167 ff.) contains a verse translation of the *Hippolytus* in Afrikaans, followed by sixteen pages of explanatory notes. But the first four chapters (pp. 1-92), one-third of the book, are not so much an account of Euripides as a brief history of Greek tragedy. Considerable space is devoted to Aeschylus (pp. 56 ff.) and to Sophocles (pp. 47 f., 62 ff.), and chapters on the Greek theater, the production of plays, and the origin and development of tragedy provide a useful introduction to the subject and cover much the same ground which Flickinger and Norwood have treated more fully. The author has apparently kept in mind the needs of his South African readers, for he has woven into Chapter IV ('Die Tyd van Euripides') brief accounts of Pindar, Herodotus, the fifth-century philosophers and sophists, Socrates, Thucydides, and Hippocrates. Ross thus combines in one volume a rather detailed discussion of Euripides and the *Hippoly-*

*tus*, a handbook on Greek tragedy, and a short history of Greek literature in the fifth century.

The work as a whole is interesting and well-written. The various elements are neatly interwoven, and the general reader will not gain an impression of superficial treatment. Ross's approach to the many problems is scholarly throughout, and he expresses frequently his indebtedness to, or disagreement with, other scholars in his field. Flickinger, Murray, Wilamowitz, Verrall, Norwood, Pohlenz, and Van Lennep are mentioned; Kitto's book on Greek tragedy (1939) was doubtless published too late to be available to the author. There is no reference to Pickard-Cambridge's *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy* in the discussion of the origin of tragedy.<sup>1</sup> Ross seems somewhat too severe on Aristophanes; he says that Aristophanes was a follower of the old school and could see nothing good in the new development in drama; he was strongly prejudiced against Euripides and his verdict was extremely unjust (p. 102). It seems the fashion today to condemn Aristophanes in this way,<sup>2</sup> but does the explanation necessarily lie in Aristophanes' prejudice and hostility? Euripides by his innovations in drama had given to Aristophanes plentiful material for comic treatment, and we must keep in mind that Aeschylus by no means escapes criticism. It seems wiser to agree with Murray: 'It is mere blundering to say that Aristophanes thinks Euripides a bad poet and Aeschylus a good, or that he hates the one and loves the other. He sees that both are great poets.'<sup>3</sup> Ross himself emphasizes the fact that Euripides was both a realist and a romanticist.<sup>4</sup> In his discussion of the *Hippolytus*, the author stresses the lyrical and dramatic functions of the chorus; the messenger provided an epic note; Greek tragedy was thus a mingling of drama, lyric, and epic (p. 145). The *Hippolytus*, moreover, was a drama in which occurred a fatal collision between instinct (Phaedra) and self-control (Hippolytus);<sup>5</sup> Aphrodite and Artemis are treated primarily as symbolic (pp. 148-50). Ross devotes considerable space to Euripides' excellent delineation of the characters of Phaedra and Hippolytus. Hippolytus is proud ('hoogmoedig') and boasts of his purity; this is his

*hamartia* ('dwaling'); the tragedy of the play, in Ross's opinion, lies in the fact that Hippolytus meets his death for such a fault (p. 163; cf. p. 136). Theseus is considered only briefly as a minor personage (p. 152); Ross might well have devoted more attention to Theseus as a tragic character who must share part of the responsibility for his son's death; his hasty condemnation of Hippolytus and his tendency to judge his son on the basis of his own youthful experience (cf. Hipp. 967-70) seem well worth mentioning.

Ross's book is beautifully printed and contains numerous illustrations, some of which, e.g. portraits of Socrates and Thucydides (Nos. X and XI), seem surprising until one realizes that in a sense the volume serves as a brief history of fifth-century Greek literature. The work contains an index of eleven pages listing topics, plays, authors ancient and modern. Misprints are few: on p. 102 read *Orestes* for *Ovestes*; on p. 105 (n. 39) read *anagnorisis* for *anangorisis*; on p. 118 (n. 73) read Verrall for Verrale and *Poiêtês* for Poi:t:s. The reader who is not familiar with Afrikaans may possibly be interested in seeing a bit of the verse translation of the Hippolytus which comprises the second part of the volume; for this purpose I have chosen the beginning of Hippolytus' famous denunciation of women in lines 616 ff.; Ross's translation of this passage in Afrikaans is as follows (pp. 206 f.):

Ag, Zeus, waarom het U die vrou geskep—  
Dié valse munt wat ons hier só bedrieg?  
As mense hier op aarde voortgeplant  
Moes word, kon U dan nie die vrou se rol  
Skoon uitgeskakel het nie? Kon ons nie  
Wyoffers in U tempels neergelê  
Het nie, van koper, silwer, goud—net wat  
U hart begeer het—om daarmee vir ons  
Kinders te koop, na waarde van die prys?  
Dan sou ons vrede en vryheid in die huis  
Gehad het! Vroue is 'n vloek—wie weet  
Dit nie? Die vader wat 'n dogter het,  
Koop met 'n bruidskat haar 'n man, net om  
Verlos te raak! Hy weet sy is 'n vloek!

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 35, n. 2, where Ross gives numerous arguments against Ridgeway's theory (in *The Origin of Tragedy*) that tragic drama developed from the worship of dead heroes.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. W. Harsh, *A Handbook of Classical Drama* (Stanford, 1944), p. 306, who refers to Aristophanes as 'narrow and prejudiced in his judgments . . . Aristophanes had always been the enemy of Euripides. He did not have the slightest intention or desire to be fair to Euripides, nor did he feel any moral obligation to be so.'

<sup>3</sup> G. Murray, *Aristophanes* (Oxford, 1933), p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 113: 'Hy was die eerste dramatikos wat die innerlike van die mens se siel die spil gemaakt het waarom sy dramas draai'; p. 115: 'hy selfs die eerste romantikus in die Europese letterkunde genoem, en met reg as die vader van die roman beskou is.'

<sup>5</sup> Cf. p. 135: 'Geestelik beskou, is die drama dus 'n noodlottige botsing tussen natuurdrif (Phaidra) en self-beheersing (Hippolytos).'

GEORGE E. DUCKWORTH

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

## ABSTRACTS OF ARTICLES

Prepared under the supervision of Professor Charles T. Murphy of Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.

## LINGUISTICS. GRAMMAR. METRICS.

CARPENTER, RHYS. *The Alphabet in Italy*. Commerce does not necessarily spread literacy: Syracuse, a Corinthian colony, did not use the Corinthian alphabet, but learned its letters at Delphi. So, despite extensive commerce with Corinth, Etruria learned the alphabet from the Greeks of Cumae (first quarter of the 7th century), and at first took over, and transmitted, even those letters for which the Etruscans themselves had no use. It was the Etruscans, then, from whom the Latins received the alphabet, and from the same source writing spread to the East Italic and North Italic peoples. Sometime before Julius Caesar, but not necessarily earlier than the 2nd century, the North Italic form of writing passed beyond the Italian frontier. In this way archaic Greek letters eventually provided the basis for Runic writing. III.

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(Walton)

CHANTRAINE, P. *Grec Νόστιμος. νόστος*. Homeric word for 'return', acquiring technical sense of 'revenue', 'returns' from the land; the adjective coming to mean 'productive', 'fruitful', 'nourishing', eventually 'agreeable', as in modern Greek; development traced with examples from ancient to modern times.

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(Taylor)